

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

May 12, 2020

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Speaker of the House
United States House of Representatives
H-232, U.S. Capitol
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Kevin McCarthy
Minority Leader
United States House of Representatives
H-204, U.S. Capitol
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Speaker Pelosi and Minority Leader McCarthy,

As you consider future federal aid legislation to guide the nation's response to COVID-19, we write to request an additional \$47 billion in supplemental funding to stabilize universities and colleges and support students pursuing higher education. These institutions are essential to a strong recovery by ensuring that we have a highly-trained workforce and continue our global leadership in research and innovation.

American colleges and universities are facing unprecedented challenges as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, including shouldering the financial burden of the transition to distance learning, refunding some room and dining expenses, and managing its associated impacts. Meanwhile, students are reevaluating their plans for the fall semester in light of rapid changes in their families' financial circumstances, public health concerns, and restrictions coronavirus imposes to learning in a classroom setting. For these reasons, colleges and universities are expecting significant, potentially unparalleled, declines in enrollment, both from current students who cannot afford to return, and those who will never start. Institutions are also bracing for depleted endowments and state budget cuts that will further strain the much needed ability to support student learning in the next academic year.

In the aftermath of the 2008 recession, many lower- and middle-income Americans were priced out of higher education. Congress must act to provide strong assistance to students, their families, and institutions of higher education to enable colleges and universities to remain economic engines in their regions and ensure our nation can continue to compete globally by investing in a highly-skilled workforce.

The CARES Act took an important first step in delivering critical relief and addressing the immediate financial needs of our most vulnerable students, but significant further investment is necessary. To meet both existing need and to ensure students and families have the resources to return to college in the fall, we request a \$47 billion supplemental appropriations to the Department of Education to be disbursed as formula grants to institutions of higher education.

We propose that at least 50% of the funds be allocated to address student financial need and request sufficient flexibility to address sudden changes in students' circumstances due to the economic decline. The remaining funds may be used by institutions to cover costs associated with losses due to the coronavirus. As students are currently making decisions about their fall semester plans, it is necessary for the federal government to act swiftly in making additional funds available to support investing in our nation's students, families, and higher education system. We recommend utilizing the same allocation and distribution formula created in the CARES Act which has the benefit of allowing for swift disbursement of assistance

This investment will ensure that universities and colleges continue doing their part to fight COVID-19 and provide a foundation for our future economy. More importantly, this investment ensures that as we emerge from our current health crisis, our lower- and middle-income students will not be left behind.

Thank you for your kind consideration of our request to provide direct relief for students and institutions of higher education.

Sincerely,



DANIEL W. LIPINSKI
Member of Congress



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Member of Congress

SUZANNE BONAMICI
Member of Congress

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Member of Congress

MARCIA L. FUDGE
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ANTHONY BRINDISI
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